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10 Attorneys for Plaintiff  
11 JOHN STOSSEL

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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
**NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**  
**SAN JOSE DIVISION**

JOHN STOSSEL, an individual,

Case Number: 5:21-cv-07385-VKD

Plaintiff,

**DECLARATION OF KRISTA L. BAUGHMAN  
IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFF'S STATUS  
REPORT RE: SERVICE**

v.

META PLATFORMS, INC., a Delaware corporation; SCIENCE FEEDBACK, a French non-profit organization; and CLIMATE FEEDBACK, a French non-profit organization,

Defendants.

1 I, Krista L. Baughman, declare and state as follows:

2 1. I am a partner at Dhillon Law Group Inc. and counsel for Plaintiff John Stossel  
 3 (“Plaintiff” or “Mr. Stossel). I am an attorney in good standing duly admitted to practice before all  
 4 Courts of the State of California. I am admitted to practice law in the states of New York and  
 5 California, and admitted before all state, federal and appeals courts in the state of California, and the  
 6 United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Except as to those matters stated on  
 7 information and belief, I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth herein and if called as a  
 8 witness could and would competently testify thereto. As to those matters stated on information and  
 9 belief, I believe them to be true.

10 2. An online search of France’s Trade and Companies Register, Infogreff, indicates that  
 11 Defendant Science Feedback is listed with Infogreff and maintains a business address in Paris.  
 12 Attached as Exhibit A is a true and correct copy of the information resulting from this search,  
 13 performed on September 22, 2021 (the Exhibit copy includes version in both French and English). A  
 14 similar search on the Infogreff database performed for Climate Feedback yielded no results.

15 3. When I performed a search on Wikipedia for “Science Feedback” in September, 2021,  
 16 prior to filing the Complaint, Wikipedia provided the following description: “Science Feedback is a  
 17 site founded in September 2018 as a French Association déclarée by Emmanuel Vincent to parent  
 18 several subsidiary FCWs, amongst which are Climate Feedback (CF) and Health Feedback (HF).” I  
 19 note that the current version of this Wikipedia page, accessed December 7, 2021, recites that the page  
 20 was edited on December 7, 2021 at 2:42 UTC, and now different language appears, but the page still  
 21 refers to Science Feedback as a parent of Climate Feedback.

22 4. Attached as Exhibit B hereto is a true and correct copy of Science Feedback’s  
 23 homepage, available at <https://sciencefeedback.co/>, which I accessed on December 7, 2021.

24 5. Attached as Exhibit C hereto is a true and correct copy of Climate Feedback’s  
 25 homepage, available at <https://climatefeedback.org>, which I accessed on December 7, 2021.

6. Attached as Exhibit D hereto is a true and correct copy of Science Feedback's webpage titled "Team members, advisors and contributors," available at <https://sciencefeedback.co/team-advisors-contributors/>, which I accessed on December 7, 2021.

7. Attached as Exhibit E hereto is a true and correct copy of Climate Feedback's purported fact-check of Mr. Stossel's reporting, available at <https://climatefeedback.org/claimreview/climate-change-forest-management-and-several-other-causes-contribute-to-wildfire-severity-and-total-area-burned-in-the-western-united-states/?fbclid=IwAR3s8qPmSScINCXh9fKFUfKxA1HRF-u07sFpp24fg9UOn8SdVTeQUHzEuGk>, which I accessed on December 7, 2021.

8. Attached as Exhibit F hereto is a true and correct copy of Meta’s webpage captioned “About Fact-Checking on Facebook,” available at <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/2593586717571940?id=673052479947730>, which I accessed on December 7, 2021.

9. In September 2021, our firm engaged the help of a vendor experienced with effecting service on foreign defendants through the Hague Service Convention. This vendor advised us that such service ordinarily takes 4 to 5 months from submission of a request to proof of service, and quoted our firm a total service price of \$6,800, inclusive of the cost to translate into French the multiple service documents required by this Court's Local Rules for valid service of a summons.

10. On October 9, 2021, through a legal vendor retained by our firm, our firm served legal process in this action on Nicole Forrester in West Virginia. A true and correct copy of the Affidavit of Service provided to our firm by our vendor is filed at ECF Dkt. 23.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: December 7, 2021

/s/ Krista L. Baughman  
Krista L. Baughman

# EXHIBIT A

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## SCIENCE FEEDBACK

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Select

[Not entered on the Trade and Companies Register](#)[BACK TO RESULTS](#)[NEW ADVANCED SEARCH](#)

## COMPANY INFORMATION SCIENCE FEEDBACK

[VIEW OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS](#)[IDENTITY](#)[OFFICE\(S\)](#)

### COMPANY DESCRIPTION

**Entry on the SIRENE listing:** 09/2018  
**SIREN identifier:** 842 192 692  
**SIRET identifier of the registered office:** 842 192 692 00031  
**Legal category:** Association déclarée  
**Primary Activity Undertaken (APE):** Autres services d'information n.c.a.

### OFFICE DESCRIPTION

**Entry on the SIRENE listing:** 04/2020  
**SIRET identifier:** 842 192 692 00031  
**Brand name:**  
**Address:** 21 PLACE DE LA REPUBLIQUE  
75003, PARIS 3  
**Primary Activity Undertaken (APE):** Autres services d'information n.c.a.

## OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

It is not possible to place an order for offices not entered on the Trade and Companies Register

[SIRENE database, rights reserved](#)

Last update on 21/09/2021

### Who are we ?



Infogreffe est le Groupement d'intérêt Economique (GIE) des greffes des tribunaux de commerce français. Infogreffe est la plateforme de services en ligne destinée à accompagner les entreprises et faciliter les moments-clés de leur développement.

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Infogreff's Partner Network : The National Council of Commercial Court Registrars - European Business Register - Agence France Entrepreneurs - les-aides.fr - Service-Public.fr

Se Connecter



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Entreprendre en confiance

S'informer sur les entreprises

Démarches en ligne

Tribunal Digital

Autres services

Datainfogreff

Entreprise, dirigeant, greffe, formalité, actualité, nom, nom + code postal, SIREN...



Recherche avancée

## SCIENCE FEEDBACK

[PARTAGER LE LIEN VERS CETTE FICHE ENTREPRISE](#)[EFFECTUER UNE FORMALITÉ](#)[Sélectionner](#)[Non Inscrit au Registre du Commerce et des Sociétés](#)[RETOUR AUX RÉSULTATS](#)[NOUVELLE RECHERCHE AVANCÉE](#)

## INFORMATIONS SUR L'ENTREPRISE SCIENCE FEEDBACK

[VOIR LES DOCUMENTS OFFICIELS](#)[IDENTITÉ](#)[ÉTABLISSEMENT\(S\)](#)

### DESCRIPTION DE L'ENTREPRISE

<b>Inscription au répertoire SIRENE :</b>	09/2018
<b>Identifiant SIREN :</b>	842 192 692
<b>Identifiant SIRET du siège :</b>	842 192 692 00031
<b>Catégorie juridique :</b>	Association déclarée
<b>Activité Principale Exercée (APE) :</b>	Autres services d'information n.c.a.

### DESCRIPTION DE L'ÉTABLISSEMENT

<b>Inscription au répertoire SIRENE :</b>	04/2020
<b>Identifiant SIRET :</b>	842 192 692 00031
<b>Enseigne :</b>	
<b>Adresse :</b>	21 PLACE DE LA REPUBLIQUE 75003, PARIS 3
<b>Activité Principale Exercée (APE) :</b>	Autres services d'information n.c.a.

## DOCUMENTS OFFICIELS

Aucune commande possible pour les établissements non inscrits au Registre du Commerce et des Sociétés

[Base de données SIRENE, droits réservés](#)[Dernière mise à jour le 21/09/2021](#)

### Qui sommes nous ?

## infogreff

Infogreff est le Groupement d'intérêt Economique (GIE) des greffes des tribunaux de commerce français. Infogreff est la plateforme de services en ligne destinée à accompagner les entreprises et faciliter les moments-clés de leur développement.

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- Cibler des entreprises
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Le réseau des organismes partenaires : Conseil National des Greffiers des Tribunaux de Commerce - European Business Register - Agence France Entrepeneur - [les-aides.fr](#) - [Service-Public.fr](#)

## EXHIBIT B

Accurate information is the foundation of a functioning democracy

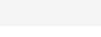
## WHAT WE DO

Science Feedback is a worldwide network of scientists sorting fact from fiction in science based media coverage. Our goal is to help readers know which news to trust.

## Latest Claim Reviews - CLIMATE

## More Climate Claim Reviews

## Latest Claim Reviews – HEALTH

MISLEADING	INACCURATE
 <p><i>"Omicron COVID Variant Found ONLY in Fully Vaccinated"</i></p> <p><b>Bill Hennessy, Gateway Pundit</b></p> <p>- 03 Dec 2021</p>	 <p><i>"Forbes article is evidence that COVID-19 vaccines change our DNA"</i></p> <p><b>Social media users, Facebook, Instagram</b></p> <p>- 02 Dec 2021</p>

## More Health Claim Reviews

Latest Article Reviews - CLIMATE

Annotations 1 Page Notes

Overall scientific credibility: 'Low' to 'Very low' according to the scientists who analyzed this article.

Is There Really a Climate Emergency? Steven Koonin, PragerU

Scientific Credibility **-1.4**

Very high +2  
High +1  
Neutral 0  
Low -1  
Very low -2  
n/a Not Applicable

ClimateFeedback.org Find more details in Climate Feedback's analysis

Annotations 1 Page Notes

Overall scientific credibility: 'High' according to the scientists who analyzed this article.

Rain fell at the normally snowy ... Rachel Ramirez, CNN

Scientific Credibility **+1.3**

Very high +2  
High +1  
Neutral 0  
Low -1  
Very low -2  
n/a Not Applicable

ClimateFeedback.org Find more details in Climate Feedback's analysis

PragerU

CNN

More Climate Article Reviews

## Latest Article Reviews - HEALTH

Annotations 1 Page Notes

Overall scientific credibility: 'Neutral' according to scientists who analyzed this article.

Young adult cannabis consumers ... Megan Marples, CNN

Scientific Credibility **+0.5**

Very high +2  
High +1  
Neutral 0  
Low -1  
Very low -2  
n/a Not Applicable

HealthFeedback.org Find more details in Health Feedback's analysis

Annotations 1 Page Notes

Overall scientific credibility: 'Low', according to scientists who analyzed this article.

Vaccine inventor questions mandatory shot push, Biden's Covid-19 strategy Malone & Navarro, The Washington Times

Scientific Credibility **-1.3**

Very high +2  
High +1  
Neutral 0  
Low -1  
Very low -2  
n/a Not Applicable

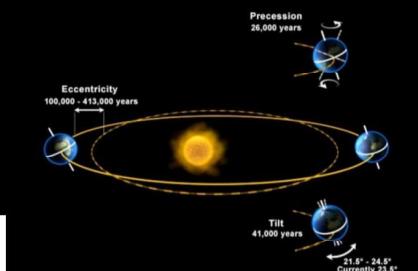
HealthFeedback.org Find more details in Health Feedback's analysis

CNN

Washington Times

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## Latest Insight articles – CLIMATE



Explainer: How the rise and fall of CO<sub>2</sub> levels influenced the ice ages

The Earth's climate has been quite stable over the past 11,000 years, playing an important role in the development of human civilisation. Prior to that, the Earth experienced an ...

- 02 Jun 2021



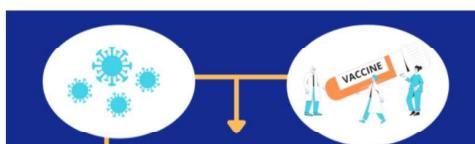
The potentials and limitations of tree plantings as a climate solution

the international conversation on tree plantings as a solution to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the atmosphere and mitigating the rise in global surface temperature is mixed, with judg...

- 11 Jun 2020

More Climate Insights

## Latest Insight articles – HEALTH



Sam Ghali, M.D.

I just left the ER.

We are officially back to getting crushed by COVID-19.

Delta Variant is running rampant and it's MUCH more transmissible than the original virus.

99% of our ICU admits did NOT

I just left the ER.

We are officially back to getting crushed by COVID-19.

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99% of our ICU admits did NOT

I just left the ER.

We are officially back to getting crushed by COVID-19.

Delta Variant is running rampant and it's MUCH more transmissible than the original virus.

99% of our ICU admits did NOT



## Infection-induced immunity versus vaccine-induced immunity: Weighing the benefits and risks

*Introduction* Multiple articles and social media posts have debated the strength of infection-induced immunity—commonly referred to as natural immunity—compared to vaccination...

- 03 Nov 2021

Receive a vaccine.  
Virtually ALL of them wish they had.

Receive a vaccine.  
Virtually ALL of them wish they had.

Receive a vaccine.  
Virtually ALL of them wish they had.

We are officially back to getting crushed by COVID-19.  
Delta Variant is running rampant and it's MUCH more transmissible than the original virus.

We are officially back to getting crushed by COVID-19.  
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Delta Variant is running rampant and it's MUCH more transmissible than the original virus.

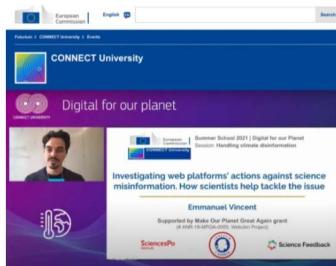
**Statements in Project Veritas video contradict public health authorities and experts' recommendation for eligible children to be vaccinated against COVID-19**

*Introduction* On 27 September 2021, the group Project Veritas published a video on several social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, containing claims that...

- 02 Oct 2021

[More Health Insights](#)

## News & Events



Science Feedback invited to speak at European Commission CONNECT University, Digital for our Planet

*Emmanuel Vincent, PhD, Founder & Director of Science Feedback was invited to participate in the European Commission CONNECT University Summer School 2021, Digital for our Planet...*

- 09 Jul 2021



Science Feedback is awarded an IFCN Development Grant to build database on sources of misinformation

*Science Feedback is very pleased to be awarded a development grant from the Poynter Institute's International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN). This grant aims to further innovation ...*

- 24 Aug 2020

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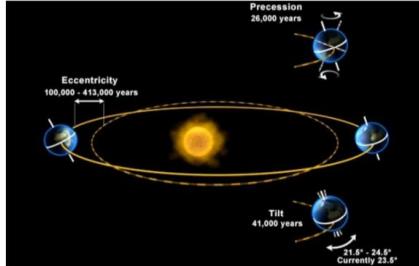
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### Explainer: How the rise and fall of CO<sub>2</sub> levels influenced the ice ages

*The Earth's climate has been quite stable over the past 11,000 years, playing an important role in the development of human civilisation. Prior to that, the Earth experienced an ...*

- 02 Jun 2021



### The potentials and limitations of tree plantings as a climate solution

*the international conversation on tree plantings as a solution to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the atmosphere and mitigating the rise in global surface temperature is mixed, with judg...*

- 11 Jun 2020

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## News & Events



### Perugia International Journalism Festival: media, news and the future of climate change

*This panel will address these topics with experts coming from some of the leading experiences in the field that encompasses the communication of climate change for public opinion a...*

- 08 May 2019



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### Tackling misinformation and disinformation in Science: a workshop organized by the European Science-Media Hub, Wednesday 6 February 2019

**European Science-Media Hub Workshop 'Tackling misinformation and disinformation in science'**

*How to tackle disinformation in science? How scientists and journalists could work better together in order to prevent misinformation? The knowledge lab of the ESMH on 6th February...*

- 11 Feb 2019

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**Forbes**

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## EXHIBIT D



# Team members, advisors and contributors

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## Team



### Emmanuel Vincent

**Founder & Director**

Emmanuel completed a PhD at the University Pierre et Marie Curie (Paris, France) and a post-doctoral fellowship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT; Cambridge, USA), studying how the Ocean controls Hurricane intensity and how Hurricane can in turn influence the climate via their interaction with the Ocean. He launched Science Feedback to help the scientific community play a leading role in providing the public with accurate information on scientific topics.



### Iria Carballo-Carbaal

**Science Editor, Health**

Iria earned an undergraduate degree in biology and an MSc in secondary education from the University of Oviedo (Spain). After obtaining her PhD in Neuroscience from the University of Tuebingen (Germany), she worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Vall d'Hebrón Research Institute (Barcelona, Spain). Her research has focused on understanding the molecular basis of Parkinson's disease to search for new treatments.



### Fernanda Ferreira

**Science Editor, Health**

Fernanda has a PhD in Virology from Harvard University and a Masters in Science Writing from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As a freelance science writer, her work has appeared in *MIT Technology Review*, *Science*, and other publications. She joined Health Feedback in 2021.



### Sophie Fessl

**Science Editor, Health**

Sophie Fessl has a PhD in developmental neurobiology from King's College London and a degree in biology from the University of Oxford. After completing her PhD, she swapped her favorite animal model, the fruit fly, for pen and paper. As a freelance science journalist and writer, she covers neuroscience, oncology, biology and research news.



### Nikki Forrester

**Science Editor, Climate and Ecology**

Nikki holds a PhD in ecology and evolutionary biology from the University of Pittsburgh where she studied plant-bacterial interactions. As a freelance science writer, she covers climate, ecology, evolution, and research news. Her work appears in *Nature*, *Science*, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and other outlets.



### Ian Le Guillou

**Science Editor, Health**

Ian completed a PhD in biochemistry from the University of Cambridge (U.K) where he studied protein structures. After his PhD, he worked in communications for medical research charities to explain the latest science to the general public. As a freelance science writer, Ian now covers a range of biomedical research with work appearing in *Chemistry World*, *The Scientist*, and *Horizon* magazine.



### Lambert Baraut-Guinet

**Science Editor, Climate**

Lambert earned Masters in Geochemistry from the *Institut de Physique du Globe de Paris* and in climate change communication from the *Université Paris Saclay*. After his PhD in isotopic geochemistry at the *Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle* where he studied mass-independent isotopic fractionation processes of ozone, he worked as a

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### Rubén Portela Carballeira

#### Science Editor, Health

Rubén earned an MSc in environmental sciences and a PhD in ecology from the University of A Coruña (Spain). During his doctoral studies he did stays at the Beijing Forestry University (China), the Federal University of São Carlos (Brazil), and the University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro (Portugal). His research focused on invasion ecology, related to clonal plant species, and ecological modelling. He works as a freelance writer and science communicator.



### Pablo Rougerie

#### Science Editor, Health

Pablo obtained his PhD in Immunology from the University Paris – Descartes (France). He then worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (New York, U.S.) and at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). His research focused on different topics in cell biology, including the regulation of T lymphocyte activation, the mechanics of cell deformation, and the use of biomaterials of specific geometry to guide the growth of biological tissues.



### Flora Teoh

#### Science Editor, Health

Flora obtained a PhD in Biological Sciences from Nanyang Technological University (Singapore). During her doctoral studies, she examined how a human-colonising microbe could evolve in response to changes within a mammalian host, and how this process could influence microbial virulence. After a brief stint as a postdoctoral fellow at the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology (Singapore), she joined Health Feedback in 2018 as science editor. She has also worked as a freelance science writer – her articles have appeared in *Asian Scientist Magazine* and *A\*STAR Research*.

### Susanna Nilstam

#### Chief Of Operations

Susanna completed a Master degree in Marketing & Business Administration at Lund University School of Economics and Management. She worked for many years as Head of Marketing for a French Film Distribution Company, until deciding to join On Purpose – a one-year leadership program supporting experienced professionals to switch into the social enterprise sector.

### Erwan Ledoux

#### Tech Lead

Erwan completed a PhD in statistical physics. He then brought his expertise to the software engineering department at the artificial intelligence company Snips, and later joined the French "Ministère de la Culture" on the "pass Culture" project. He specializes in the construction of web and mobile applications and intelligent data processing systems of all types.

### Quan Trinh

#### Full Stack Developer

Quan graduated from Nanyang Technological University in Singapore with a degree in Digital Animation. After a few years working as a game developer, he came to France to study at Ecole 42 and worked with startups to develop web applications that help to better lives.

### Vincent Cristia

#### Finance & Partnerships Lead

Vincent completed a Master degree in Economics at AgroParisTech (Paris Saclay University) and holds a Master of Public Administration from Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA). He worked for the French Ministry of Economy and Finance as head of higher education and research office. He later joined the French Agency of continuing professional education (Afpa) as deputy CEO.

#### How we work

Science editors identify trending news and claims according to their influence on social media and the quantity or degree of scientific evidence within the reporting. Once an article or claim is selected for review, one editor leads the fact-checking effort by contacting relevant experts, reading and summarizing the scientific literature on the topic, and writing a draft of the review. At least one other editor reviews the draft, challenges the claims, and pinpoints where additional clarity and references are needed. Challenging questions are decided by the director.

## Advisors

### Kerry Emanuel

Professor of Atmospheric Sciences, MIT

Member of the US National Academy of Science

### Thomas Malone

Professor of Management, MIT Sloan School of Management

Founding director of the Center for Collective Intelligence

### Christelle Perrin

Head of Communication, Marketing and Influence actions at Fermes d'Avenir

### Richard Somerville

Professor Emeritus, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego  
Science Director, Climate Communication

### Anthony LeRoy Westerling

Associate Professor, University of California, Merced

## Former contributors

### Scott K. Johnson

#### Science Editor, Climate

Scott holds a Master of Science in Hydrogeology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He teaches college-level Earth science, and has worked as a freelance science journalist covering the geosciences since 2011, primarily for *Ars Technica*.

### Jessica P. Johnson

#### Science Editor, Biology

Jessica holds an MS in microbiology from UMass Amherst and an MS in science journalism from Boston University. She has conducted laboratory and field research in biofuels and environmental restoration. And since 2011 she has covered science research news for *PNAS*, *Nature Medicine*, *The Scientist*, and others.

### Marie Penché

#### Fundraising & Development Officer

Marie completed a master's degree in Telecommunications Engineering at the French IMT Lille Douai engineering school. She worked for 10 years as Project Manager in the telecommunications sector, until she felt the need to work for purpose-driven organisations. She recently initiated a transition to the social enterprise sector by joining the On Purpose Associate program and, as such, joined Science Feedback for a 6-month placement. She will focus on fundraising activities and also drive workflows improvement.

## Acknowledgments

- Ben Okun — Editorial support
- Daniel Nethery — Associate Editor
- Laura Kiritze-Topor — Graphic Design
- Lauren Raimondo Gaffney — Graphic Design

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## EXHIBIT E



## Climate change, forest management and several other causes contribute to wildfire severity and total area burned in the western United States

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## CLAIM

"Forest fires are caused by poor management. Not by climate change."

## VERDICT

MISLEADING

SOURCE: Facebook users, Facebook, 9 Sept 2020

## DETAILS

**Misrepresents a complex reality:** The causes and behaviors of wildfires in the western US are influenced by a variety of factors, including weather conditions, climate change, past fire suppression practices, and an increase in the number of people living near wildlands.

**Incorrect:** Scientific studies demonstrate clear links between climate change, hotter and drier conditions, and an increase in dry vegetative fuel load, drastically increasing the amount of forest fire area in the western US.

## KEY TAKE AWAY



In addition to land management practices, the severity of wildfires in the western US is influenced by extreme heat, drought, and the amount of dry vegetative fuel, which are all linked to human-caused climate change. Climate change is not the only factor that affects fire behavior, but it is an important one. Since 1984, the forest fire area in the western US likely doubled due to climate change.

## REVIEW

**CLAIM:** "Forest fires are caused by poor management. Not by climate change. While fire behavior is affected by weather and climate...fires around the state of California do not happen because of climate change; they are caused because of an unsustainable fuel load and failed environmental practices."

## REVIEW

The claim that the forest fires currently burning in the western United States are caused by poor forest management and not climate change appeared in multiple Facebook posts published in September 2020. While forest management practices, specifically fire suppression, have increased the fuel load, scientific evidence also links climate change to hotter and drier conditions, which increase the amount of dry vegetative fuel and the total area burned in the western US<sup>[1]</sup>.

Forest management efforts like thinning and prescribed burns are important to restore forests to the lighter fuel loads that existed before the fire suppression policies of the 20th century, says Valerie Trouet, an associate professor at the University of Arizona. But climate change is also a key contributor to fire severity today. As described in Abatzoglou and Williams (2016), "human-caused climate change caused over half of the documented increases in fuel aridity since the 1970s and doubled the cumulative forest fire area since 1984" (see figure below)<sup>[1]</sup>.

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Daniel Swain  
Climate Scientist, University of California, Los Angeles



Stefan Doerr  
Professor, Swansea University



Zeke Hausfather  
Director of Climate and Energy, The Breakthrough Institute

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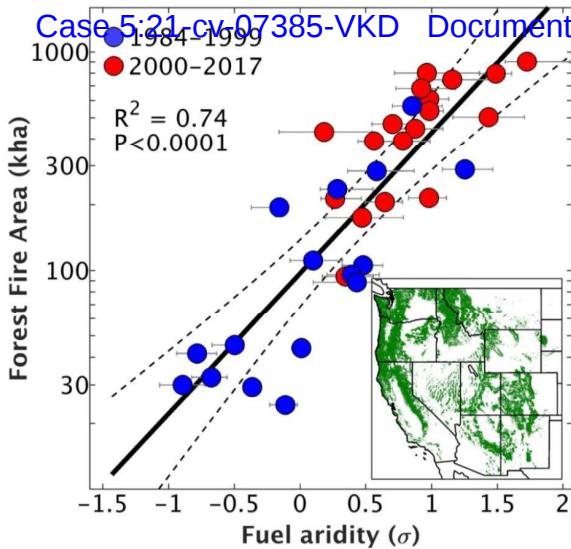


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Science Editor, Climate

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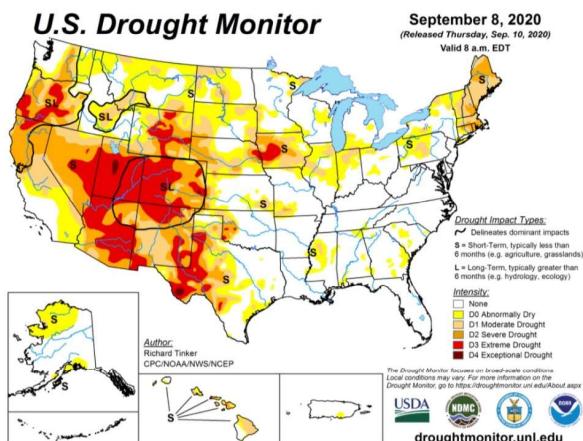
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Figure—Western US forest fire area on a logarithmic scale compared to standardised fuel aridity, with data points during the 1984-1999 (blue dots) and 2000-2017 (red dots) periods highlighted. Map insert shows the western US forest areas. From Abatzoglou et al. (2016)<sup>14</sup>.

Several states in the western US, including California, Oregon, and Washington, are currently experiencing extreme drought (see figure below).



August was also the hottest month on record for California. These conditions, combined with strong winds, increased the severity of the current wildfires.

In addition to climate and weather, factors such as past fire suppression (causing fuel accumulation over time) and people living in closer proximity to wildlands also influence wildfire behavior, as described by the reviewers below. For a more in-depth discussion of how climate change influences wildfires in California, see our 2018 post: A discussion with experts on California wildfire links to climate change.

UPDATE (8 October 2020): Stossel TV claimed this review was inappropriately used to apply a "Missing Context" flag to their video on Facebook. This claim is based on a misrepresentation of our process, and of the assessments of the scientists who contributed to this review. For an explanation of how we rated their video, read our post published [here](#).

## SCIENTISTS' FEEDBACK

**Zeke Hausfather, Director of Climate and Energy, The Breakthrough Institute:**

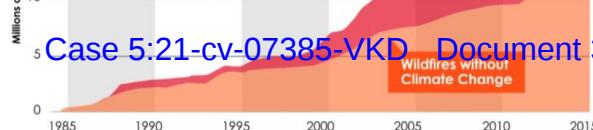
*(Comment from a previous evaluation of a similar claim)*

It is claimed that climate plays no role in natural disasters and wildfires fly in the face of a large peer-reviewed scientific literature showing clear links between climate change and extreme heat events, drought, and extreme rainfall as well as links between hotter and drier conditions and wildfire areas burned in many regions of the world<sup>[2-5]</sup>.

All three factors – buildup of vegetation due to fire suppression, more people living in the wildland-urban interface, and hotter and drier conditions have contributed to severe wildfires in regions like the western US in recent years.

A 2016 study showed that climate change is responsible for over half the increase in fuel aridity (drier fuel load), and has doubled the cumulative forest area burned<sup>[1]</sup>. Rising average global temperatures have led to higher spring and summer temperatures, which in turn have led to earlier spring snowmelt. Further, there is evidence that climate change is causing winter rains to come later in autumn, and stop earlier in spring<sup>[6,7]</sup>. This is extending the area and time periods in which forests become combustible, and in parts of California, fire season is now 50 days longer than in 1970<sup>[8,9]</sup>.





**Stefan Doerr, Professor, Swansea University:**

*(Comment from a previous evaluation of a similar claim)*

Several global climate trends promote fire: increased temperature, frequency, intensity and/or extent of heatwaves, droughts and extreme winds. This is very well established and summarised in the IPCC (2014) report<sup>[2,3]</sup>. Climate change has led to an increase in area burned in regions where fires burn more intensely and have a greater impact (e.g. western USA and Canada)<sup>[1,10]</sup>.

**Daniel Swain, Climate Scientist, University of California, Los Angeles:**

*(Comment from a previous evaluation of a similar claim)*

This is misleading and incorrect as stated. While the legacy of 20<sup>th</sup> century forest management policies, as well as urban incursion into the wildlands, are indeed relevant in some areas, research has shown that such non-climate factors cannot account for the enormous increase in area burned by wildfire both in the broader American West and California specifically.

In fact, drying of vegetation due to climate change is responsible for about half of the observed increase in western U.S. forest fire area burned over the past several decades<sup>[1]</sup>. More specifically in California, observed warming and drying more than doubled the occurrence of extreme fire weather conditions between 1979 and 2018—a trend that is attributable to human-caused climate change<sup>[10]</sup>.

#### REFERENCES

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#### NOTES

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